

Minority and Small Business Participation and Outreach Plan

Work with minority-focused and small business groups that support MWBE and small business inclusion in the solicitation of bids. These groups include the Community Development Corporation (CDC), Small Business Technology Development Center (SBTDC) at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, the Black Chamber of Commerce, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Community Action Group, Partners for Economic Inclusion, Greater Wilmington Chamber of Commerce, Wilmington Small Business Network, and others as they become available and known to the City. Link web sites where possible so those MWBE firms can gain broad access to bidding information, business development resources, and training opportunities.

Place more emphasis on the importance of soliciting certified MWBE firms and small businesses for subcontracting opportunities at pre-bid conferences and in the bid documents. Examine specifications to identify special subcontracting opportunities and strongly encourage prime contractors to solicit bids for subcontracts from MWBE firms.

Provide detailed information to majority contractors concerning the City's MWBE Policy and Procurement Policy and provide information on N.C.G.S. 143-129 by holding meetings with the contractors.

Assess the effectiveness of the MWBE Program and identify opportunities to enhance it by evaluating MWBE participation and compliance and reviewing the "good faith efforts" provided in bid packages. Feedback will be given to bidders regarding their "good faith efforts" submitted in the bid packages.

Identify subcontracting opportunities unique to each construction contract and project and concentrate heavily on targeting certified MWBE firms and small businesses that have expressed an interest in City of Wilmington projects. Identify these opportunities and contact interested businesses no later than 10 days prior to the bid opening and provide a list of prime contractors who are pre-qualified to bid on the project.

Build new business relationships through networking and continue networking with other North Carolina cities and counties to find out how their Outreach Program and MWBE program is working and sharing "best practices" and ideas to improve the program.

Participate in educational opportunities throughout the community through seminars and training sessions, to share the City's MWBE Program with interested businesses and organizations.

Be visible through participation in trade shows and business organizations of interest to MWBE firms, majority contractors and small businesses, and provide information

to the general public about the MWBE Program, and continue outreach efforts to the business community.

Enhance the City's web page by better defining the MWBE policy, listing good faith efforts, and creating links to MWBE resources, and creating awareness of specific subcontracting opportunities.

Make available to minority-focused agencies, a list of subcontracting opportunities when they are identified, no later than 10 days prior to the bid opening, and a list of prime bidders that subcontractors may wish to contact for subcontracting consideration.

Review the feasibility of using a reciprocal certification program with other municipalities to "grow" our list of MWBE certified vendors because many of our contractors are from out of town.

Purchasing staff will interview subcontractors during routine visits to construction sites to determine contractor compliance.

Establish a database specifically for MWBE firms and majority contractors to ensure that those firms wishing to do business with the City have access to up to date information.

Help build relationships between minority and majority contractors.

Advertise in minority-focused media, upcoming bid opportunities.

Work with Architects and Engineers to make subcontracting opportunities more noticeable and more easily understood by potential contractors and subcontractors.